

# Metal Architecture

July 2011

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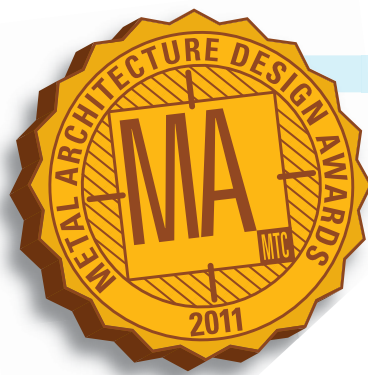
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2011

## Design Award Winners

Also inside:

- + Professional certifications
- + A sustainable community center
- + Market Feature: Hotels & Resorts



## Silver Waves

**Metal mesh ceiling defines a space and offers surprising lighting options**

By Paul Deffenbaugh, Editorial Director

Anybody walking into the American Sector Restaurant at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans will immediately feel the connection to the war. The ceiling near the entry off the central parade ground is lower and then raises in metal mesh waves toward the opposite side of the restaurant, which opens to the public street. The metal mesh evokes both the waves of a landing beach and, according to project architect Martin Stigsgaard of New York-based Voorsanger Architects PC, "a contemporary and abstract impression of World War II military gear."

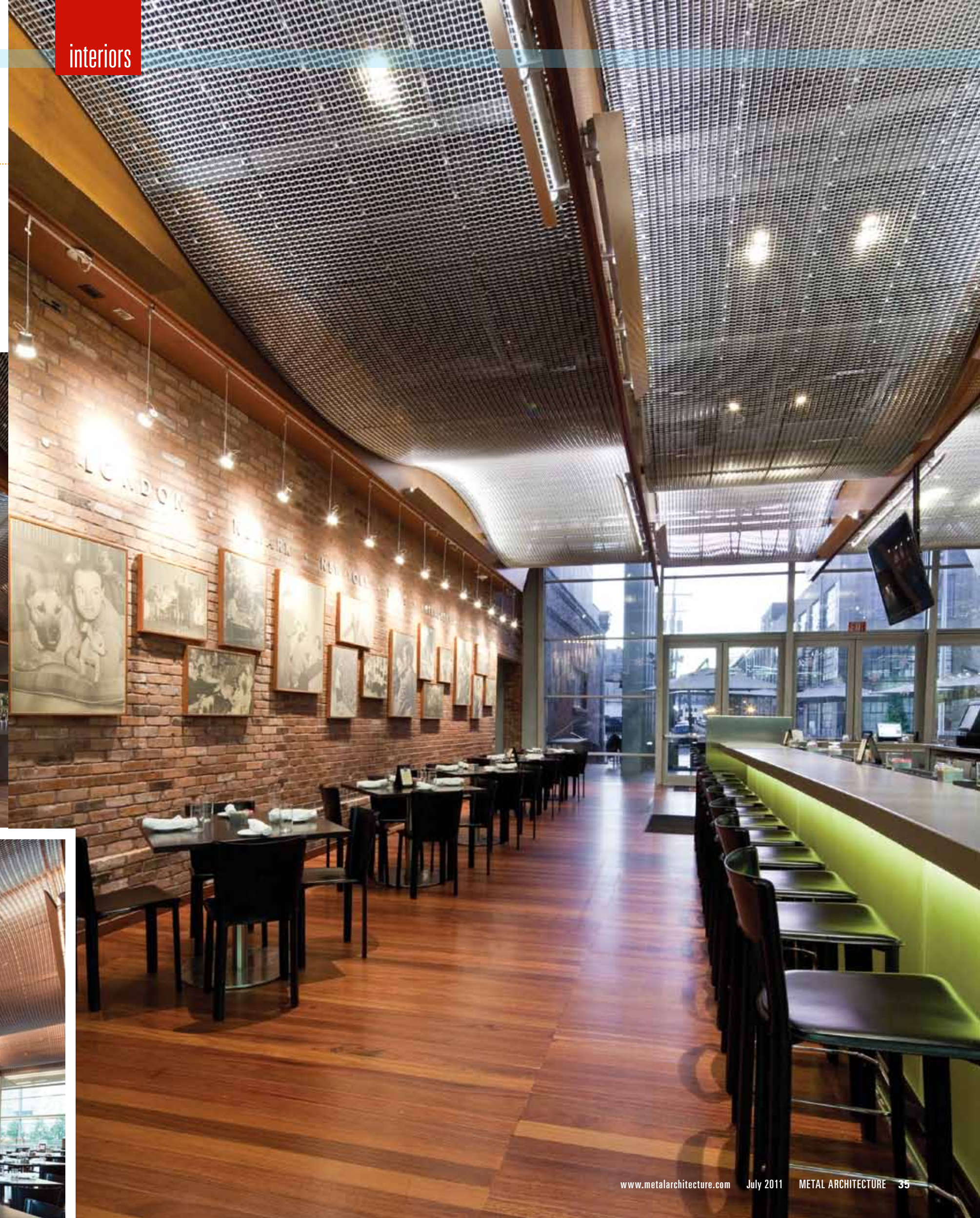
Award judge Andrew Cottrell says, "The metal mesh creates a powerful statement invoking many images of the war, while at the same time providing basic screening functions for an overall clean, contemporary space."

Cambridge Architectural, Cambridge, Md., developed a one-of-kind woven metal fabric comprised of stainless steel and totaling 2,351 square feet. Well-known New Orleans chef John Bash created the restaurant as a go-to destination for residents as well as tourists, according to principal architect Batholomew Voorsanger. "It's been an incredible success."

A significant element of that is the environment created by the use of the metal mesh ceiling. Voorsanger says: "The material was surprisingly flexible. We could ventilate through it, light through it. At the same time, it is the one material that gives it a profoundly distinctive personality." The architects and judges point to how the lighting works with the mesh to heighten the effect of the metal and create even more drama in the space. Lighting attached to the wooden runners reflects up across the mesh giving the steel greater depth by the play of lightness and darkness. Above the mesh, lighting illuminates the areas, providing ambient and direct light for diners and work staff.

The flow of the ceiling certainly conjures the sense of waves, but as the ceiling nears the public

street, it swoops up to the top of a curtainwall, offering patrons a dynamic space, as the ceiling seems to soar away from them. Guests walking up to the entrance see the full features of the mesh and an illuminated and inviting space.



### The American Sector Restaurant at the National World War II Museum, New Orleans

- COMPLETED:** November 2009
- TOTAL SQUARE FEET:** 6,700 square feet
- BUILDING OWNER:** National World War II Museum
- ARCHITECT:** Voorsanger Mathes LLC, a joint venture between Voorsanger Architects PC, New York, and Mathes Briere Architects, New Orleans
- GENERAL CONTRACTOR:** Satterfield & Pontikes Construction Inc., Houston
- INSTALLER:** Manufab Inc., Kenner, La.
- ARCHITECTURAL MESH:** Cambridge Architectural, Cambridge, Md., [www.cambridgearchitectural.com](http://www.cambridgearchitectural.com)